+Kerri Sullivan

Expertise Statement

Prof. Noonan

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Running

In my town girls participating in sports is pretty much a social norm. This is why throughout middle school I played a variety of sports: soccer, basketball, softball. But by the end of eighth grade I came to the horrible realization that I sucked at all three. Then I had to face the realization that next year in highschool I would have to try out for all of these teams and there was a big chance I would not make any of them.

My older sister Shawna is ten years older than me and offered up the idea to me to participate in Cross Country in the fall. At first I wasn't intrigued by the idea for many reasons. One because durring soccer running up and down the field over and over again was my least favorite part. Second because running 3 miles in one race seemed impossible to me and third because Shawna was so amazing at Cross Country that my family would compare her ability to mine and I would be considered a failure. But I signed up anyways because it seemed to be my best bet at getting involved in something.

That summer I received my running schedule and it was horrifying to me to think that the coach expected me to run all those miles in one week. Feeling stressed I asked my sister for help and so she decided to help me train. That summer I ran all my miles and found out i'm actually pretty good at long distance running. The first week of real practice I fell in love with the sport right away. Most people think that a running sport must be boring because it's individual but in actuality the team momentum is key to success.

Running for me was a stress reliever from the burden of school and friends. It was a distraction and a therapy session in a way because running with my friends helped me build strong relationships with my team. By the second week coach moved me up to varsity not because I was extremely talented at the time but because the team lacked skilled upperclassman.

After cross country my natural reaction was to try Winter Track and then Spring Track after that. And although I enjoyed both they didn't compare to my love for Cross Country. Every year that passed during Cross Country I got better and better. Normally people think running is a sport anyone can do because it does not involve a skill but in reality running is’nt about pysical toughness its mostly about mental toughness. It about being in the midde of a three mile workout and ignorning the pain in your legs telling you to stop, its about perceveiring and pushing yourself beyond what you think your body limits you and its about beleiving in yourslef. Only then will you be sucessful at running.

By my senior year I beat all of Shawnas personal records in Winter Track, Spring Track and Cross Country. I was recruited by multiple division three and division two universities for Cross Country. I was awarded a Hockomock Allstar Award and placed 14th in my division meet. But most importently I helped my team win first place in our league meet. Cross country was the first thing I could feel proud to be apart of because I felt as though I contributed my fair share. It also taught me to not be scared to try new things. It gave me confidence and sicial skills that have changed me to be the person I am today.